



*The President's Daily Brief*

*28 February 1972*

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

28 February 1972

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

London and Peking have agreed to raise their diplomatic representation to the ambassadorial level. (Page 1)

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In the Laos fighting, Vang Pao's irregulars operating east of the Plaine des Jarres are encountering stiff enemy resistance. (Page 3)

Israel is continuing its air and ground attacks against fedayeen bases in Lebanon. (Page 4)

Additional Communist main-force units in eastern Cambodia are moving closer to the South Vietnamese border. (Page 5)

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Libyan Deputy Premier Jallud is in Moscow in quest of more Soviet arms. (Page 7)

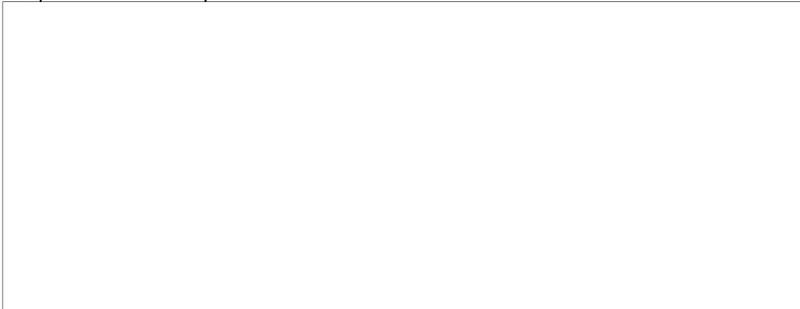
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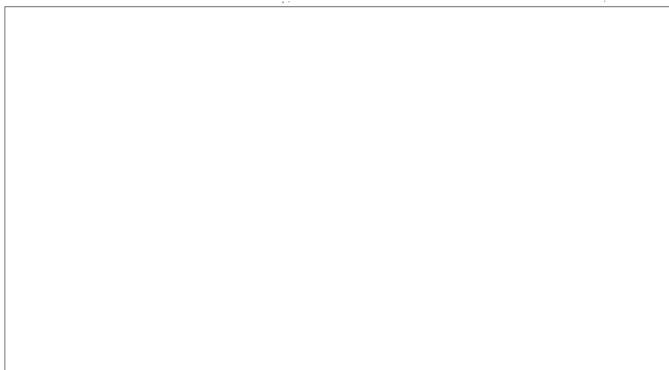
*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

CHINA-UK

London and Peking have agreed to raise their diplomatic representation to the ambassadorial level.



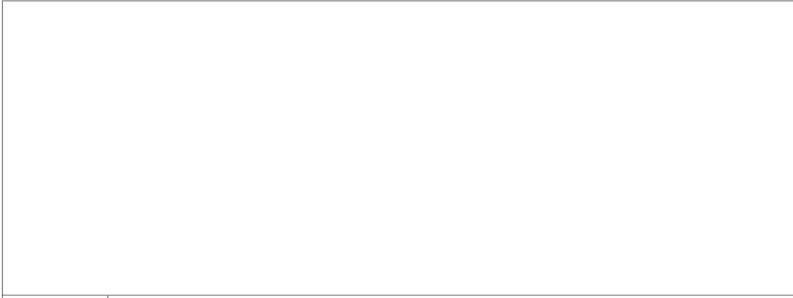
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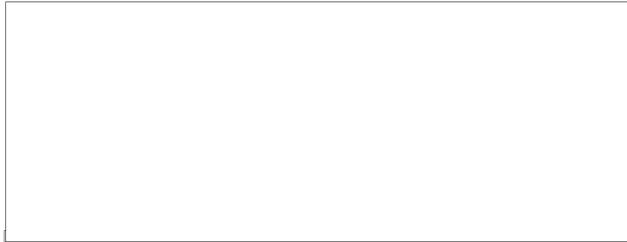
**NORTH VIETNAM - US**



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LAOS

Vang Pao's irregulars operating east of the Plaine des Jarres are encountering stiff enemy resistance. The North Vietnamese have reacted most strongly to one task force that had been moving toward the enemy's 130-mm. guns and supply caches on the southern edge of the Plaine. This force has been hit hard several times in the past few days and has retreated deeper into the foothills southeast and east of the Plaine. The other three task forces have also been under attack and have made little forward progress. One of these groups, however, has occupied high ground overlooking Route 4, an enemy supply artery east of the Plaine, and is directing air strikes on trucks and supply areas.

Military activity around Long Tieng and Sam Thong remains light. Intercepted messages indicate that troops of a third North Vietnamese regiment have moved north from Long Tieng, apparently to defend a major supply dump near the Plaine. Two other regiments had moved earlier in response to Vang Pao's operations. Three or four enemy regiments remain in the area of Long Tieng, however, and aerial observers report that the Communists are moving great quantities of supplies into depots south of the Plaine.



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**ISRAEL-LEBANON**

Israel is continuing its air and ground attacks against fedayeen bases in Lebanon. Israeli aircraft repeatedly attacked the town of Nabatiyah, the site of a Palestinian refugee camp and a fedayeen regional headquarters. The Israelis also launched air-supported infantry and armored strikes against the village of Habbariyah near Mt. Hermon where Israeli bulldozers are clearing an assault road. Israeli aircraft ranged over central Lebanon as far north as Bayt ad-Din, about 20 miles southeast of Beirut, apparently providing air cover. Both fedayeen and Israeli reports noted exchanges of fire across the Syrian frontier in the Golan Heights area over the weekend. Syrian military officials, however, would not confirm fedayeen reports that Syrian anti-aircraft units had fired on Israeli planes, according to Damascus radio.

Reports available to the US Embassy in Beirut indicated that at least 17 persons died in the air attacks on Nabatiyah and that another 50 were injured. Some 20,000 refugees from the border areas were expected to reach coastal cities by Monday morning.

Israeli officials stated Sunday night that their forces would withdraw from Lebanon Monday night when they had completed building access roads into the border area.

Meanwhile, the Security Council has unanimously approved a resolution demanding that Israel refrain from further military ground and air actions against Lebanon and immediately withdraw its military forces from Lebanese territory.

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

CAMBODIA - SOUTH VIETNAM

Additional Communist main-force units in eastern Cambodia are moving closer to the South Vietnamese border. An infantry regiment from both the 7th and 9th divisions has relocated to the Mimot area, close to Viet Cong 5th Division elements normally operating there. The intelligence unit of the 7th Division, as well as headquarters and intelligence elements from the 9th, have been detected close to the border, indicating that the headquarters from both divisions may already be located there. In addition, radio direction-finding indicates that the last 9th Division unit west of the Mekong River--the 271st Regiment--has returned to its base area in the Chup plantation east of the river.

*This is the closest that parts of three main-force Communist divisions in eastern Cambodia have been to South Vietnam's Tay Ninh Province since just before the allied cross-border operations of May 1970.*

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

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THAILAND

Bangkok is conducting its largest counter-insurgency operation to date. The Thai Army has committed over 12,000 troops against one of the largest Communist base complexes in northern Thailand. The Communists are putting up stiff resistance and have inflicted well over 200 casualties on the Thai forces.

*Despite the strong resistance, the government is committed to a major effort to overrun the insurgent stronghold. Even if it does so, however, the army will have to establish a permanent presence in the area if the operation is to have lasting value.*

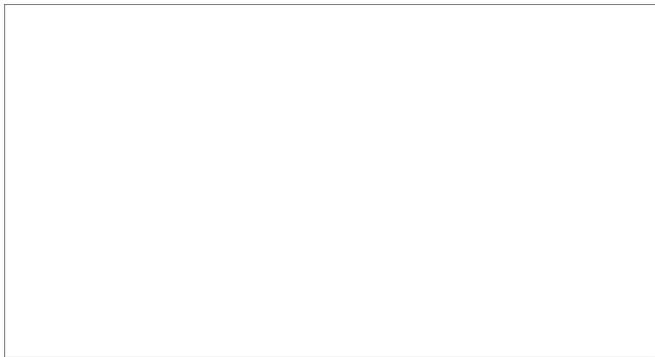
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USSR-LIBYA

Libyan Deputy Premier Jallud arrived in Moscow on 23 February for a five-day visit in quest of more Soviet arms.



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*The Soviets would like another arms agreement with the Libyans, who can pay in hard currency, but they would want the Libyans in return to curtail the anti-Soviet polemics that have emanated from Tripoli for the past year. Qadhafi, nonetheless, still shows little inclination to temper his criticism of the Soviets.*

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CHILE-US-USSR

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NOTES

South Vietnam: Military activity has dropped off in South Vietnam in recent days, although Communist harassing attacks continue. Intercepts and reports from other sources indicate that enemy forces in a number of provinces are encountering difficulties from allied bombings and ground sweeps, but they are continuing to prepare for future attacks.

Malta-UK: Prime Minister Mintoff postponed at the last minute talks in London this weekend with Prime Minister Heath. Mintoff called off his trip after receiving a message from Heath that London refuses to make further concessions. In reply, Mintoff renewed a demand that London stand by its offer to the previous Maltese government of \$7.8 million for improving Malta's drydocks. The UK told Malta last summer that this offer had been withdrawn because of its new and more generous over-all proposal for a settlement.

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